

"To Our Pride In the Past, and Our Hope for the Future, Let Us Add Vigorous Work in the Living Present."

R. M. WHITE & SON, Props. — L. M. WHITE, Editor.

MEXICO, AUDRAIN COUNTY, MISSOURI, THURSDAY, JANUARY 8 1920

Vol. 61 No 46

O. D. THOMPSON LOSES LIFE IN FIRE

Father of Manager and Owner of the Orpheum Theatre Dies in Flames When Theatre Burns

PET CAT GAVE ALARM

Mewing of Animal Aroused Father and Son to Flames Which Were All About Them.

The Orpheum Theatre is a blackened shell of smouldering debris and O. B. Thompson, father of Manager S. C. Thompson, is dead as a result of the fire that destroyed the building early Saturday morning. Had it not been for the timely warning of the elder Mr. Thompson's pet cat both father and son would likely have been burned to death.

Nothing is left standing of the theatre but the four walls. The structure is practically a total loss. The origin of the fire is not known but it is thought to have started on the stage in the rear of the building and above which were the living apartments of Mr. Thompson and his father.

Pet Cat Gives Warning.

According to S. C. Thompson, manager and owner of the theatre, who is suffering from burns and bruises received in escaping from the building, he was aroused by the insistent mewing of his father's pet cat, which stays in the apartment with them. When he stepped from his bed to learn what had disturbed the animal, he found the floor almost too hot to stand on.

He aroused his father and ran to the entrance to the stairway that leads from the rooms to the rear of the stage. When he reached the door a rush of flame met him. He turned and grasped his father and started for a back window, that being the only means of escape left.

The elder Mr. Thompson is 82 years old and not very active. As they reached the window Mr. Thompson tried to get his father to climb through. His father broke from his grasp and ran toward the door. As the son started toward him the door burst open and his father fell beneath a heap of burning wood. Seeing his father was gone Mr. Thompson ran to the window, with the flames at his heels, and taking hold of a downspout climbed to the roof of the Larsen building. He says if he had had a half minute more time he could have saved his father.

The body of O. B. Thompson was found about daylight in the ruins of the theatre burned beyond recognition. S. C. Thompson was fortunate to escape with only several bad burns and some painful bruises. That he was not more seriously hurt is considered remarkable. Shirley Thompson made a brave fight to save his father's life and it was a miracle that he did not lose his own in the risk he took the rescue his father.

Orpheum Theatre Loss Heavy.

The loss of the theatre will total close to sixty thousand dollars as an original investment but would represent much more than this to be replaced at present costs. It was one of the largest and most modern moving picture theatres in the state.

Besides an operating room with the very latest projecting equipment it was outfitted with a \$10,000 pipe organ and contained every modern appliance to give its patrons the very best service possible.

It was the only house in the state charging six and eleven cents admission for the class of pictures being shown. Since coming to Mexico Manager Thompson has built up a splendid business and was popular with all who knew him. The death of his father and his property loss will both bring the full sympathy of the community to his door.

The loss of the building and furnishings, including a pipe organ, is estimated at about \$65,000. The interior of the building was entirely destroyed, and only the four walls, which were constructed of concrete blocks, remain. They, however, will probably not be in condition to be used again unless they are greatly reinforced. Mr. Thompson came to Mexico eight years ago, built the theatre and has been operating it ever since. His father came to live with him four years ago.

Damage was done to none of the neighboring buildings except that directly to the west, which is occupied by the Gem Candy Company. The

STATE BOARD OF WOMEN VOTERS HERE

The State Board meeting of the Missouri League of Women Voters will be held in Mexico, January 15. The conference will be held in the afternoon at the Elks' club and a banquet will be given at Hotel Hoxsey in the evening.

This will be the social event of the winter. Dean Walter Williams of Columbia will be the principal speaker at the banquet. Mrs. Geo. Gelhorn of St. Louis will be toastmistress and Mrs. Geo. Still of Kirksville will be one of the speakers.

Mr. Williams is well known in Mexico. Mrs. Gelhorn is president of the Missouri League of Women Voters and Mrs. Still is president of the State Federation of Women's Clubs.

Make arrangements to attend this interesting entertainment.

plastering on the walls and ceiling there was badly water soaked and is expected to fall. The fire, however, did not penetrate the walls. The floors were flooded with about three inches of water, but other damage was not done.

The Larsen building immediately to the east of the theatre was not damaged, but fourteen of the automobiles were run out of the garage until it was seen that the building was not going to catch fire. The wind was from the south, and the building most endangered was the Masonic Hall. It was saved by a stream of water thrown from the roof of the Crown Laundry building.

O. B. Thompson, leaves two sons, S. C. Thompson, of this city, and C. B. Thompson of South Dakota. For years he was a prominent business man of Mason City, Iowa, and was held in the highest esteem by all who knew him.

Mr. Thompson had \$7,500 insurance on the building and its contents; \$2,000 of this amount was on the pipe-organ which is valued at \$10,000. Manager Shirley C. Thompson, of the Orpheum Theatre, stated Monday that he had made no plans regarding the rebuilding of the Orpheum but that if it were rebuilt it would not be on the old site. Mr. Thompson is still suffering from painful burns and the shock attendant to the loss of his father in the fire. He announced that if he rebuilt the Orpheum it would be on another location and on a much larger scale.

Quite a little money was destroyed in the fire as Mr. Thompson usually kept his receipts for the week in his office until the following Monday when it was banked. Already 38 pounds of melted silver money has been recovered. The "find" was made by Bert Squires who was instructed about where to look by Mr. Thompson. About \$150 in paper money was also found.

The pet cat which aroused S. C. Thompson and his father when the Orpheum theatre burned early Saturday morning, was raised from a kitten by the elder Mr. Thompson, who was very fond of pets. This animal had never been off of the second floor of the theatre, having been born in a room adjoining Mr. Thompson's apartments.

Mr. Thompson, senior, cared for the cat with a tenderness that endeared the animal to him. He never sat down in the apartment that it did not jump into his lap or snuggle up to him and purr. When the cat heard Mr. Thompson approaching downstairs, even before his steps could be heard by the human ear, it would run to the door of the room and stand expectant and mew a welcome which was always rewarded by much petting.

The inquest over the body of O. B. Thompson was to have been held at 10 o'clock Monday morning, but was postponed until some time Tuesday because S. C. Thompson's attending physician did not consider his condition good enough to enable him to be present. It is thought that the body will be shipped to Mr. Thompson's former home in Iowa for burial after the inquest is held.

The body of O. B. Thompson, who was burned to death in the fire which destroyed the Orpheum Theatre Saturday morning, was taken Monday night to Mason City, Iowa, Mr. Thompson's former home. Funeral services were held and burial was made there Tuesday afternoon. The body was accompanied by C. B. Thompson, a son, from S. Dakota.

MISS EVELYN THRELKELD TO WED NEXT SUMMER

Engagement to Marshall Pratt, is Announced Thursday at Mrs. Fred Peck's

JUNE MAY BE MONTH

Young Couple Will Make Home on Farm Near McCredie, According to Present Plans.

The engagement of Miss Evelyn Threlkeld and Marshall Pratt, of McCredie, was announced at a party given by Mrs. Fred Peck, sister of the bride-to-be Thursday afternoon. The wedding will take place some time next summer, probably in June.

Eleven of Miss Threlkeld's girl friends were guests of the occasion and the surprising announcement came in such a fashion that none of them suspected what was taking place until the news was almost upon them. Mrs. Peck had prepared a small Christmas tree, upon which she had placed a gift for each of the young ladies present. They were singularly similar in appearance, being small cards in envelopes; upon each card was found directions for the performance of a stunt by the respective recipients. All the others had done the things requested of them when it came Miss Mildred Pearl's turn. Her card bade her tell a love story which she did, using as her characters Miss Threlkeld and Mr. Pratt; the tale ended in the usual way, with the statement that they were "to be married and live happily ever after."

Mrs. Peck served a two course luncheon. The following were present: Mesdames R. A. Burcks, Melville Paul, Fred Doss, Guthrie, of McCredie, and Mesdames Carolyn Worrell, Stella and Mittie Peck, Anna D. Fish, Vera-Rutter, Mildred Pearl and Nellie Noel, of Martinsburg.

Miss Threlkeld is the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. T. A. Threlkeld, of this city. She was graduated from McMillan High School in 1916 and from Hardin College in 1918. Since that time she has been secretary for the Christian Church. She is one of Mexico's most highly respected and most popular young ladies.

Mr. Pratt is a prosperous young farmer of McCredie. He, too, has many friends and is respected everywhere he is known.

WOMEN VOTERS BUSY.

Mrs. Robt. Ferris, County Chairman, Appoints Leaders For Towns.

Mrs. Robert Ferris, chairman of Audrain County for the purpose of organizing the women voters, has appointed the following chairmen for the various towns in the county: Mrs. T. J. Johnson, Mexico; Mrs. R. L. Alford, Vandalia; Mrs. A. R. Hancock, Laddonia; Miss Anna Miller, Rush Hill; Mrs. W. H. Coil, Benton City; Mrs. G. W. Pike, Martinsburg; Mrs. Arch Jacobs, Farber; Mrs. Taylor Dowell, Moline.

The women of Mexico will meet Saturday afternoon in the library for the purpose of organizing a league of voters.

Mrs. Henry D. Llewellyn, who has been spending the Christmas holidays with her parents and friends in Mexico, returned to her home in Marshall Friday.

Miss Mildred Moore, of McArthur, O., who has been visiting friends in Mexico, for the last three weeks, has returned to her home.

Henson Williams, a son of V. C. Williams, enrolled Saturday in the Chillicothe Business College for a course in telegraphy and station work.

Little Miss Catherine Schopp, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Schopp, is recovering from a very serious attack of the measles.

J. E. Fish has returned from a short visit in Illinois. He spent Sunday near Peoria and came home by way of Chicago.

W. E. McDaniel and Chas. Bartels, of Centralia, were in Mexico Monday and Tuesday.

Mr. and Mrs. W. N. Jones are spending a few days in Kansas City.

McDoe Spurling, of Skinner, was in Mexico Saturday on business.

The Public Servant

A newspaper, if it would fulfill its economic purpose, is a public servant.

It is a guardian of the public safety as well as a conveyor of news.

Hence it must remain free from any entangling alliance or guard carefully against the danger of friendship or gratitude influencing its policy against what is best for all.

The day of the newspaper whose purpose is some political preferment, or the advocacy of some special privilege is gone. Personal interests or personal selfishness in the editing of a newspaper quickly nullifies any possibility the publication may have for real public service.

The policy of the Ledger has always been constructive along the lines of the best interests of the people. There have been times and will be times when you may disagree with our attitude on some public question but we have remained steadfast to our belief, honestly adhering to an opinion which we truthfully thought was for the good of all.

Honesty of purpose should be the guide of every publisher. Without that he is unfaithful to his public trust. More and more the public is realizing the responsibility of the press. And this fact we believe is doing much to make for better and higher principled newspapers.

The Ledger is a public servant. Its editor seeks no office and keeps free from any condition that might in the slightest effect the paper's activities for the best interests of all.

F. Mitchell White

COUNTY OVERLAND AGENCY.

Smith Bros., Auto Co., Announce Territory Covered.

Cleve Smith, of Smith Bros. Auto Co., of this city, is home from St. Louis where he was in conference with the Overland Automobile Co., and announces that he is still the Overland agent for Audrain, Montgomery and Cole counties. His Audrain territory, Mr. Smith said, included Rush Hill, Laddonia, Farber, Vandalia, Benton City, Martinsburg, Moline, Thompson and Mexico.

Stoddard Society to Meet.

The Stoddard Society will hold an all-day meeting at the Presbyterian Church Thursday, beginning at 10 o'clock. Ladies of the third ward will be hostesses, and a full attendance is desired. Sewing for one of the mountain schools will be done during the day, and in the afternoon a musical program will be given.

Mrs. Will Keath Hurt On Ice.

Mrs. Will Keath slipped and fell on the ice in the back yard at her home on N. Clark street Wednesday morning, and severely hurt her left arm below the elbow. The doctor was not able to tell whether or not the bone was broken.

R. C. Ruthmeyer, of the Western Insurance and Adjustment Company and A. J. Knapp, of an independent adjustment company, were in Mexico Wednesday for the purpose of adjusting the Orpheum Theatre loss.

Mrs. Phoebe Randall Brogan, of Parsons, Kansas, is the guest of Mexico friends who were delighted to see her again. Mexico was her former home.

J. A. McClelland, of the North British and Mercantile Insurance Company, was in Mexico on business Wednesday.

Mrs. J. A. Kennan, of Thompson, was discharged from the Audrain Hospital Wednesday, after having been there a week.

Mrs. U. Rodecap, who lives two miles from Mexico, is ill at her home, as the result of a fall on the ice a short time ago.

Mrs. John McIntyre and daughter, Hazel, have returned from Cleveland, Okla., where they visited Mrs. John Kirby, Mrs. McIntyre's daughter.

Bert Bunch has gone to Kansas City where he will remain, conducting his business, for several months.

Arthur Holmes is now with Pitts Barber Shop.

Lee Bros., bought 12 head of horses in Fulton Monday.

H. B. Kirk, of Vandalia, was in Mexico on business Wednesday.

Mrs. R. M. White leaves Thursday for a visit in St. Louis.

LEDGER CLASSIFIED ADS PAY.

IS GRANTED DIVORCE AND \$30,000 ALIMONY

Mrs. Rosa E. Stuart, after having lived with her husband, J. L. Stuart, 36 years, is granted a divorce and \$30,000 alimony by Judge Gantt in the Circuit Court Monday afternoon. Mr. and Mrs. Stuart are the parents of twelve living children, two of whom are under age. For many years they have made their home on a large farm just southwest of Laddonia.

According to the petition filed by Mrs. Stuart and testimony given in the trial, Stuart left his home last March and has continually, since that time, been closely associated with another woman, supposed to be about 19 years of age, in St. Louis. He made no reply to the petition filed by his wife.

MISS BERTIE CORDNER DEAD.

Former Mexico Girl Dies at Fulton Home.

Miss Bertie Cordner, 36 years old, died at midnight Sunday at her home in Fulton. She was a daughter of Mrs. Bertie Cordner and until a few years ago resided here where her father was in the butcher business.

The funeral will be from the noon Alton branch train Tuesday and the burial in Elmwood where the body will be taken direct from the station. Besides her mother she leaves a sister, Mrs. Dixon, of Chicago; and two brothers, Robert, of Fulton and Fred of Auxvasse. Her death will be learned with deep regret by a wide circle of friends here. She was a woman who was popular with all who knew her.

The Ledger joins in extending deepest sympathy to the bereaved.

FEWER ARRESTS IN 1919.

Only 44 Committed to Audrain Co. Jail Last Year.

Forty-four commitments to the Audrain County jail were made in 1919 as compared to sixty the year previous, according to the jail record of Sheriff J. G. Ford. Only one woman was included in the number for last year, while six of the sixty committed in 1918 were women. The percentage of white among those committed in 1918 was larger than the percentage in 1919. Thirty, including the one woman, more than half of the entire number, were white, in 1919; while in 1918 thirty-three, including all the women, were black.

All of the jail sentences imposed in 1919 were made alternative to the payment of fines and therefore many of the number who were committed to jail went for only a few days, and some did not go at all, because the fines were paid immediately.

\$61,651.87 COLLECTED DEC. 31.

Co. Collector Gets Largest Amount on Last Day of Year.

The total amount of tax money deposited by County Collector Arnold on Wednesday, the last day of the year, was \$61,651.87. Only \$18,958.88 of this amount was collected in the office in the court house; \$12,028.07 coming from the C. & A. Railroad, and \$23,664.92 being sent in by the Vandalia Banking Association.

The amount collected on the last day of 1918 was \$35,000, but this did not include the C. & A. taxes, which came in earlier last year. Wednesday's collections, exclusive of the railroad check, were about \$7,000 more than those made December 31, 1918. This is probably accounted for by the fact that the board of qualification this year called for an increase of 20 per cent in taxes.

Mrs. Beasley Operated Upon.

Mrs. James Beasley, who lives a few miles from Mexico was operated upon at the Audrain Hospital Friday, and is reported to be doing nicely.

Dr. E. F. Elliott, of Kansas City, left Thursday after having spent several days with his brother, E. F. Elliott, in this city.

Miss Lena Crews has accepted a position with the Mexico Savings Bank.

R. M. White is in Ft. Meyer, Fla., for a month's visit with friends.

LEDGER CLASSIFIED ADS PAY.

PERRY LEE HOOVER ACCIDENTALLY KILLED

Returned Soldier is Shot By His Own Gun While Hunting Thursday

BROUGHT TO HOSPITAL

Leaves Parents, Five Brothers and Three Sisters—Was 25 Years Old.

Perry Lee Hoover, 25 years old, accidentally shot and killed himself while hunting near his home 5 miles north-east of Auxvasse Friday afternoon. Two of his brothers, Edgar and Earnest Hoover, were with him and as soon as the accident occurred they brought the injured man to Mexico to the Audrain Hospital, arriving here about 4 o'clock. Nothing could be done for Mr. Hoover, however, and he died at 5:40.

As nearly as the brothers could tell at the distance they were from him at the time of the accident, Hoover had set his gun down and leaned over to look into a hole in a tree; the gun slipped and discharged and the shot entered Hoover's left side.

Mr. Hoover returned June 25 from ten months' overseas service with the American Expeditionary Forces, having been in the army exactly one year. Since that time he has lived on his father's farm where he was engaged in work. He leaves a father and mother, three sisters and five brothers. The sisters are, Misses Georgie and Birdie and Mrs. Katie White, the latter of Carolina; the brothers are Lonnie, Edgar, Bartley, Earnest and Roy, all of whom live at the home of their parents.

Mr. Hoover was an upright and respected young man and his sudden death will be the cause of much grief among his many friends. The Ledger joins in extending sincere sympathy to his parents and brothers and sisters.

PTOMAIN POISONING FATAL.

Mrs. Howard Haggard, Former Fulton Girl, Died at Her Home in Dallas, Texas, Saturday.

Mrs. Howard Haggard, a former resident of Callaway county, died at 3 o'clock, Saturday afternoon, at her home in Dallas, Texas, from ptomaine poisoning, according to a message received by Mexico relatives. The message contained no particulars, except that the funeral would be held at Dallas Monday afternoon from the family home.

Mrs. Haggard, before her marriage to Mr. Haggard, in Mexico, twelve years ago, was Miss Ethel Carmany. She was a native of Callaway county and a daughter of Frank Carmany, who died about 30 years ago at his home, six miles southwest of Fulton.

Besides her husband Mrs. Haggard is survived by an eight-year-old daughter. Mr. Haggard and his family left Mexico about five years ago and went to Dallas to live. The Ledger joins in extending deepest sympathy to the bereaved.

TOM LAWRENCE DEAD.

Auxvasse Merchant Dies After Long Period of Ill Health.

Tom Lawrence, formerly in the clothing business in Auxvasse, died at his home there Thursday morning after having been in ill health a long time. He is survived only by his wife. He has many friends in Mexico who will be sorry to learn of his death. The Ledger joins them in extending sympathy to his wife.

Married in Kansas City.

Frank Summers and Miss Nora McDonald, who were issued a marriage license by the Audrain County recorder January 1, were married in Kansas City last night at the home of Mrs. C. A. Hopkins, 4447 Bellview, according to a letter just received in Mexico from Mrs. Hopkins.

Henry Ahlfeldt, formerly of Mexico, who traveled for the International Harvester Company, died last week in St. Louis, and his remains were interred at his boyhood home at Laddonia, Mo. Mr. Ahlfeldt had a host of friends in Mexico, who regret very much to hear of his death.

Mr. and Mrs. Harry Botkin and daughter of Galesburg, Ill., visited Mr. and Mrs. J. B. Botkin this week.